

PENINSULA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION (PRTPO)

The Peninsula Regional Transportation Planning Organization (PRTPO) represents four counties — Clallam, Jefferson, Kitsap,* and Mason counties. The area is characterized by the Olympic National Park, historic small towns, forests, an alpine mountain range, the only rain forest in the contiguous United States, managed timber areas, rivers, bays, ocean shorelines, and the Strait of Juan de Fuca. The PRTPO — covering 4,190 square miles — is located in the northwest corner of Washington State. The peninsula reaches farther out into the North Pacific than any other point of the lower 48 states.



Olympic Mountains



Photograph from Woldfrom theWeb.com

Pacific Ocean & coastline from Rialto Beach

Major Transportation Facilities:

The geology of the area limits access to and from the Peninsula to three significant transportation facilities: SR 104 (including the Hood Canal Floating Bridge), US 101 Loop, and SR 3. Other critical facilities and services in this region are the four counties' transit systems, eight Washington State Ferry (WSF) routes, and the privately-owned Blackball ferry route linking Port Angeles to Victoria, B.C. SR 16, including the Tacoma Narrows Bridge located just

outside the PRTPO area, also provides a critical link to the Kitsap and Olympic Peninsulas. More than 15,000 vehicles cross the Hood Canal Bridge every weekday and nearly 20,000 cross on weekend days.

Demographics:

The population of this four-county RTPO was 371,852 in 2000. This represents 6.3 percent of the state population. In Clallam (21.3 percent) and Jefferson (21.1 percent) counties

the 65 years and older population is nearly twice the state average of 11.2 percent.

	Population (2000)	Persons Per Square Mile	Median Household Income (1997)
Washington State:	5,894,121	88.6	\$41,715
Clallam County:	64,525	37.1	\$34,376
Jefferson County:	25,953	14.3	\$35,373
Kitsap County:	231,969	585.8	\$43,492
Mason County:	49,405	51.4	\$35,419

*Note: Kitsap county is a member of both PSRC and the Peninsula RTPO. Located between the Olympic peninsula and the metropolitan Central Puget Sound region, Kitsap County provides a significant access corridor between these two areas. Additionally, many Kitsap residents who commute to the Seattle metropolitan area are affected by PSRC's transportation planning.

PRTPO Freight Facts:

- More than 80% of the freight truck trips originating from these coastal counties have destinations within Western Washington.
- The Port Angeles/Sequim area, Shelton, and Port Townsend are the largest generators of freight truck traffic within the PRTPO.

Eastern Washington Intermodal Transportation Survey November 1995

Freight Movement:

The regional economy is heavily dependent on the logging and tourism industries. The primary economic exports are wood and paper products, construction equipment, and recycled materials.

Truck Freight — Trucks are the main form of freight movement in the area and the majority of truck trips support the area's timber-based economy and the needs of the local population. Seattle is the most frequent city destination (11 percent of truck trips), but wood and paper

processing facilities in Port Angeles, Longview, Aberdeen, and other Western Washington communities are the main driver of local truck transportation needs. Only 18 percent of truck trips originating from the coastal region are intended for out-of-state destinations — most of these are intended for factories or distribution centers located in Portland or other Oregon communities. Freight truck connections are closely tied to the I-5 Corridor, with US 12, US 101, and SR 104 providing the key connecting highways for most of this region's communities.

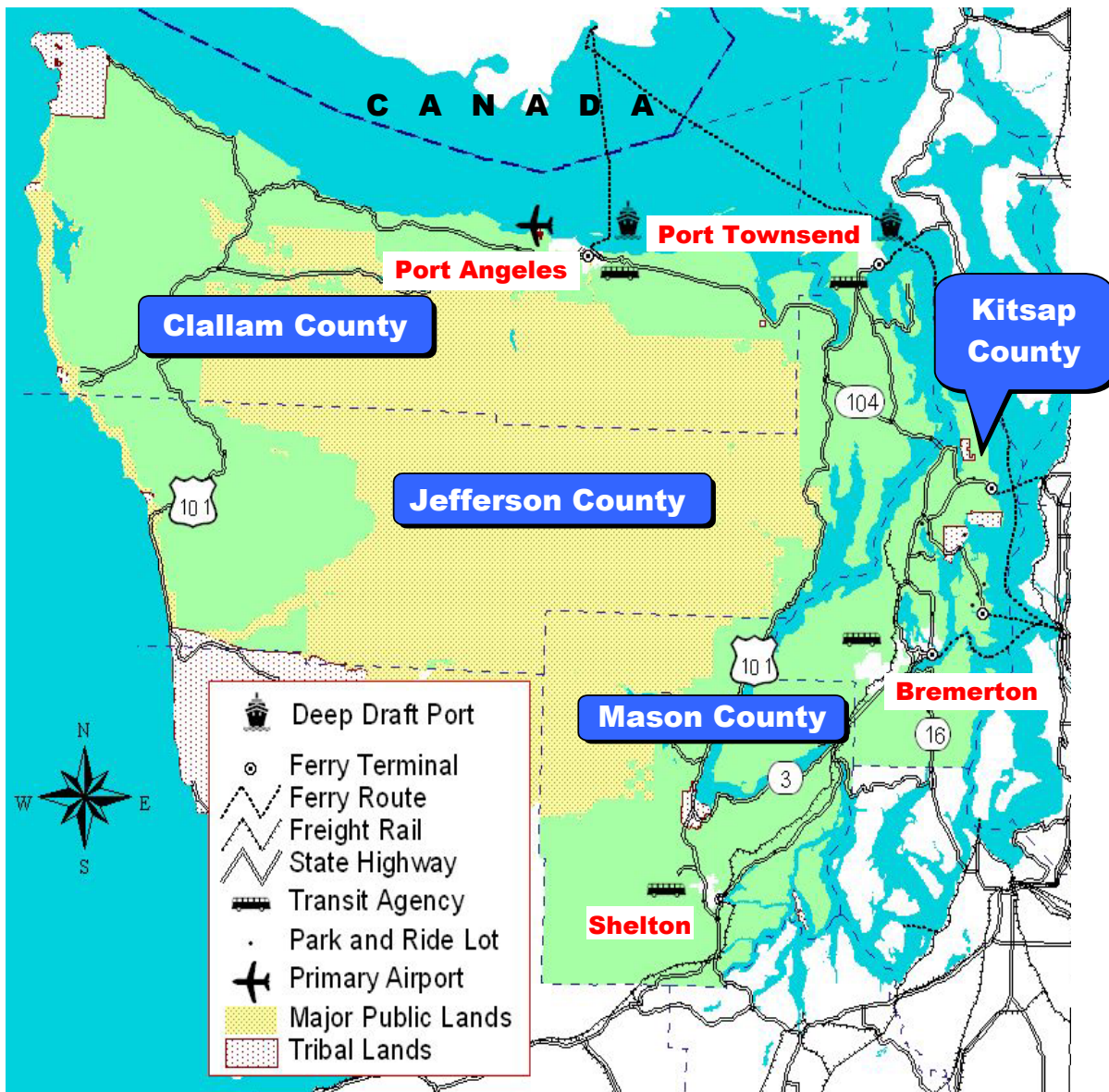
Rail Freight — The Puget Sound and Pacific Railroad provides rail service to the PRTPO. The types of transported freight are lumber products and United States Navy equipment.

Economic Trends:

Economic trends of the future may include increased business and employment as a result of advances in telecommunications. The PRTPO would like to diversify its economy and attract businesses and new employment centers to the area. Sequim supports a growing retirement community that relies heavily on medical services in the Puget Sound area — necessitating ferry service, a reliable link from the peninsula to the rest of Western Washington. Telemedicine programs — live video consultations with rural providers — are available to Kitsap County and may expand to serve Clallam County.

PRTPO Transportation Facts:

- Between 1970 and 1997 population grew 120%, while registered vehicles increased 189%.
- Between 1990 and 1997 population grew 21%, employment 10% and vehicle miles traveled grew 36%.
- Vehicle ridership on Cross-Sound ferry routes grew 23% between 1988 and 1993, while passenger ridership increased 17%.
- Between 1980 and 1990 the annual number of visitors to Olympic National Park increased by 49%.



Members: Counties: Clallam, Jefferson, Mason, and Kitsap;

Cities: Bainbridge Island, Bremerton, Forks, Port Angeles, Port Orchard, Port Townsend, Poulsbo, Sequim and Shelton;

Transit Agencies: Clallam Transit System, Jefferson Transit Authority, Mason County Transit Authority, and Kitsap Transit;

Ports: Bremerton, Port Angeles, Port Townsend, and Shelton;

Tribal Nations: Hoh Tribe, Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe, Lower Elwah Klallam Tribe, Makah Tribe, Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribe, Quileute Tribe, Quinalt Nation, Skokomish Tribe, Squaxin Island Tribe and Suquamish Tribe;

State Agency: WSDOT

Transportation Priorities:

SR 104 The Hood Canal Floating Bridge:

The SR 104 Hood Canal Bridge is consistently cited as the number one regional transportation priority. Access is severely limited without this link. Recognition of the bridge's importance to the region has been high since the west half of the bridge sank in 1979. The bridge was reopened in 1982, but the remaining east half is aging. Due to the regional significance of maintaining this bridge, funds have been identified to replace the east half by 2007.



State Route 104 – Hood Canal Bridge looking west

Hood Canal Bridge projects identified in both the WTP and the Regional Transportation Plan are:

<i>PRTPO Needs</i>	
<i>Congestion Management projects:</i>	
<i>State Highways</i>	<i>\$777.2 million</i>
<i>Ferry</i>	<i>\$15.4 million</i>

- East Half Replacement before the end of the decade.
- Continued bridge maintenance and preservation.
- Hood Canal Bridge multi-modal improvements (park-n-ride lots, bike facilities).
- Widening Hood Canal Bridge from 2 lanes to 4 lanes — providing a more reliable link to the rest of Puget Sound.

US 101: This scenic, 350-mile winding loop around the Olympic Peninsula is an essential transportation facility that provides critical access between coastal and rural communities on the Peninsula and the Puget Sound. The Peninsula's rural economies rely on this route being open to traffic at all times.

US 101 poses seasonal challenges. In the summer, congestion results from vacationers and recreational vehicles competing with local traffic and logging trucks. In the winter, communities have been isolated by landslides, rock falls, and debris flows that shut down the road. The statewide maintenance program addresses this concern for emergency response to slides and other failures on US 101.



US 101 near Lilliwaup in Mason County, Spring 1999

Examples of projects submitted by the RTPO to address this issue include:

<i>PRTPO Needs</i>	
<i>Operation, Maintenance, Preservation & Special Needs Transportation projects:</i>	
<i>Aviation</i>	<i>\$7.4 million</i>
<i>Transit</i>	<i>\$222.0 million</i>

- Widening sections of US 101 from 2 lanes to 4 lanes for climbing lanes to increase access and mobility (Jefferson County).
- Improvements on the US 101 roadway to minimize erosion, landslides, debris flows, and rock falls (Mason, Jefferson & Clallam Counties).
- Safety solutions such as passing and turnout lanes.
- Completion of the US 101 Port Angeles Transportation Alternatives Study that examines freight and commuter transportation alternatives through downtown Port Angeles (Clallam County).

Rural Character and Economic Opportunities: The economy of the peninsula region is traditionally resource-based. However, this is changing. With the loss of resource-based jobs and revenue, the region needs to diversify the economy and ensure effective freight corridors. This necessitates maintaining, preserving, and enhancing the transportation infrastructure in the rural area, which will allow for increased economic opportunities, access to employment centers, and access to services.

<i>PRTPO Needs</i>	
<i>Freight Movement projects:</i>	
<i>State Highways</i>	<i>\$279.5 million</i>

Examples of projects submitted by the RTPO:

- SR 117 / SR 101 Interchange — improves freight truck access (West Port Angeles).
- US 101 Simdars Interchange — improves the interchange to allow for multi-directional travel, improves freight access and access to business sites (Sequim).



Port Townsend to Keystone Ferry Route
with Olympic Mountains

Ferry Service: Ferries provide an additional option for accessing the Seattle I-5 Corridor, employment centers, medical services, and other destinations. Ferry service adds to the limited amount of transportation alternatives on the peninsula and increases the opportunities for economic development.

Examples of projects submitted by the RTPO:

- Addition of passenger-only ferry service between Port Townsend and Seattle.
- Addition of passenger-only ferry service between Kingston and Edmonds.

Transit, Bike and Pedestrian Transportation: The PRTPO places a high priority on enhancing rural transportation movement with multimodal facilities and services. An example of a regional success is the Olympic Discovery Trail — a recreational and commuter oriented hiking, biking, and riding trail — that will connect Port Townsend and Forks, and eventually follow the entire US 101 loop.

<i>PRTPO Needs</i>	
<i>Congestion Management projects:</i>	
<i>State-Interest Facilities</i>	
<i>Bike & Pedestrian</i>	<i>\$20.5 million</i>
<i>Transit</i>	<i>\$10.1 million</i>

Examples of investments submitted by the RTPO:

- Investments in public transportation connections at transfer facilities (Clallam, Jefferson, Kitsap & Mason Counties).
- Investments in public transportation systems to sustain basic services or replace aging equipment (Clallam, Jefferson, & Mason Counties).
- Constructing trail segments and completing gaps in the Olympic Discovery Trail.